

# Indiana House of Representatives

## News and Information

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### **STILWELL ASKS RESIDENTS TO JOIN HIM IN FIGHTING FOR ROCKPORT LICENSE BRANCH**

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Russ Stilwell (D-Boonville) today asked Spencer County residents to join him to help save the Rockport license branch from being shut down by Gov. Mitch Daniels and the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV).

"The BMV has targeted the Rockport bureau to be closed as part of what is described as an effort to cut costs," Stilwell said. "Nine branches were shut this week, and Rockport's office could be shut before the end of this year.

"This move is yet another example of the current administration's efforts to bring business values to the operation of government," the lawmaker continued. "Rather than providing the public with the services they need, this administration has proven to be more devoted to cutting public services, all under the guise of saving taxpayers money."

Rather than helping the people of Spencer County, Stilwell said closing the Rockport branch actually will cause residents greater inconvenience and take more money out of their pockets.

"If the BMV goes through with this proposal, people in southern Spencer County will have to drive around 20 miles to Dale to renew their licenses or buy new plates for their cars," Stilwell said. "That is not a short drive, and it is probably going to cause many people to have to leave work for several hours to take care of this business. Many people do not have the ability to access these services through computers, so they must transact business in person.

"I am particularly worried about the impact this closing will have on seniors in our area," he noted. "On July 1, a new state law takes effect that will require a person to have a photo ID in order to vote on Election Day. Practically the only place that a person will be able to get an ID of this type will be at their local license branch. How will we be able to get IDs for those who live in nursing homes and do not have a valid driver's license? We are simply making it more difficult for these people to get to vote."

Since state law requires the BMV to conduct a local public hearing before making a final decision on closing a license branch, Stilwell said residents should begin registering their concerns with the Bureau as soon as possible.

"We are not going to have the same advantages that the people of Hope in Bartholomew County did, when the BMV chose not to close a branch in that town simply because it was represented by Indiana Senate President Pro Tempore Robert Garton (R-Columbus)," he said.

"We are also going to have to deal with the personality of BMV Commissioner Joel Silverman, who has apparently succeeded in offending residents at every public hearing that the bureau has conducted in every community that has been targeted by the administration," Stilwell added. "Mr. Silverman believes that his decisions should not be questioned, which is exactly the wrong attitude to take when serving the people of this state, who just happen to be his boss."

A date for the hearing has not been set, but Stilwell said residents wishing to express their concerns can call the BMV at 317-233-6000, or contact his Statehouse office by calling toll-free 1-800-382-9842, e-mailing him through his Internet Web site at [www.IN.gov/H74](http://www.IN.gov/H74) or writing to him in care of the Indiana House of Representatives, 200 W. Washington St., Indianapolis, IN 46204.